Hi Rich,

This issue never came up in my conversation with Martha, which was
completely amiable. But David Lipman told me the same thing
following his conversation with Martha. So I don't really know what
she means by the public library of science "going too far".

David Lipman suggested that some scientists are put off by what they
perceive in the open letter as an antagonistic attitude toward the
journals. This was not obviously not my intent in drafting the
letter, but I've heard this interpretation more than once. David's
suggestion was that we modify the "pledge" component of the letter so
that it is purely positive - essentially stating that because the
signers want their published work to be freely available for all
purposes, they will publish their work exclusively in the journals
that have already made a commitment to make their archives freely
available through PubMed central and other hosts after 6 months.
(Leaving out any references to their reviewing, editing, subscription
practices).

This would require a modification of the current version of the
letter, with all the complications that would create, but David
argued that it would be worth it, since the letter could then be seen
unambiguously as a positive decision by the signers to do what's
necessary to make their work available and useful to the widest
possible audience.

I agree. However, changing the letter now raises many practical

issues, since we would need to ask the signers of the original
letters to approve the new version.

What do you think?

Pat